

**Reflection**  
**Sister Mary Victor Powers, SC**  
December 10, 1937 – December 12, 2025



**“Our” Lady of Knock...Who Walked Humbly with Her God**

Sister Mary Victor’s love of the Eucharist is one of the many things that drew her attention to Mother Seton.

The readings that Sister Mary Victor chose for this celebration of her life give us a deeper glimmer of “Who is Sister Mary Victor?” Like Elijah, all her life Sister Mary Victor – Mary Alice Powers–Mal–Sister Snook – has been on a quest in search of her God – and – to be found by this loving God – time and again! At 16 she knew in her heart that she wanted to be a Sister of Charity! Her parents were lovingly supportive, as were most – but not all – of the Sisters of Charity. She prevailed! And her journey had begun!

Her long and varied ministry as principal began in her “yes” to being named the youngest principal and Sister Servant at St. Edward, Herminie – at 36. The senior sister there quipped: “First time I’ve known a milk-drinking superior!” This, too, began her ministry of inclusion when she hired a paraplegic man to teach 8th grade. He was so accepted that one of my first graders thought he was lucky to be able to ride his wheelchair everywhere! He was stunned to learn that the teacher couldn’t walk!

Sister was “a family woman” who laughed, cried, rejoiced, and celebrated with her mom and dad – Kathryn Martine and Joseph (Big Joe) Powers; her sister and best friend, Geri Green, and her husband Michael; her nephews Mike and his wife Carole, Sean, Tim, and her grand-nephew Tim and family – and her many cousins, especially Susan Scott and Jere Brophy. In fact, it was at a family picnic in Herminie that Sister first injured her knee – playing softball!!

One of Mary Victor’s favorite hymns, “Our Lady of Knock,” commemorates the Blessed Mother’s appearance to those in Knock, Ireland, as a “silent presence.” This silence of heart is one of Mary Victor’s salient gifts – she listened to God with her heart and responded from her own loving heart. That was the key ingredient that made inclusion at Word of God School not only possible – but very successful. This grace also saw her through the strike at Holy Innocents. Vincent de Paul says it so much better than I: “If

God is the center of your life, no words are necessary. Your mere presence will touch hearts!” This silence of heart, nurtured in daily Eucharist and “time spent at the mouth of the cave” with her God, is the secret of her listening heart.

And so, she found it a privilege to work with the Ladies of Charity and was in awe of all that they did/do for others. Preparing their monthly reflection guide and prayer of the meeting drew her into deeper friendship with Vincent, Louise, and Elizabeth. Ladies, you were – and are – her friends and her inspiration. Adopt Sister as your special patron as you continue to work for God’s poor.

Just a few glimpses into what else gave Sister Mary Victor pleasure and enjoyment:

- She’s always been an ecologist – she rescued Peter when he was a small bunny and had him as her pet for several years.
- When her room is cleaned, there will be a bag of loose change – that went with her to many family gatherings – to be prepared for whatever was the game of the hour. It’s good to be prepared – and she willingly “staked” anyone in need. The game had to go on!!

Her interests were as varied as she was tall!

- She and a group of sisters were PGH Symphony season ticket holders for 30 years. Paganini was a favorite composer.
- And music – especially the “golden oldies” – she knew all the words and melodies, but not how to sing on key!
- Books of all kinds were treasures to be devoured and shared – they were more valuable if you could share them! And she treasured her daily reading sessions with Betsy.
- She also took great pleasure in the books she got from the Society for the Blind and listened to them daily.
- Right at the top of the list was her card-making and sending ministry, where she used her creativity to bring peace... joy... comfort... pleasure to friends, children, staff, strangers – those in need of a pick-me-up!
- And last – but not least – coaching and cheering for Pitt, Penn State, and Notre Dame on Saturdays – and the Steelers whenever they played! And the Steelers cooperated – 28–15!

Go in peace, dearest friend. Enjoy your eternal time with Jesus.

Your scribe is retiring!

- Sister Kathleen McCauley